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INSTITUTE DOES RESEARCH
ON BUILDING MATERIALS

BUILDING MATERIALS FROM INDUSTRIAL WASTES -- Borba, No 114, 15 May 49

The laboratories of the Construction Institute of the federal Ministry of Construction are investigating the possibility of making building material from certain industrial wastes. Thus, material for making blocks for partition walls can be obtained through chemical reactions from lye, wood waste, and the stems of certain plants. These blocks are very cheap and their use greatly speeds construction.

The Institute has been engaged for some time on the improvement and application of so-called elastic concrete, a new kind of reinforced concrete employing fine steel wire instead of thick iron rods, and cutting the use of iron by 80 percent. A special wire-stretching mechanism is used in making this concrete. The first such machine will be finished soon. This concrete is very solid, and can be used even for bridges.

Experiments are now in progress on new, thin concrete blocks of so-called scale construction, which will be used for large lofts in factories. These blocks are highly resistant and very cheap.

Other items being studied at the Institute include supports for floors and bridges, which will be produced serially and installed on the actual construction site. Such prefabrication is much faster, saves wood, and is of better quality.

An experimental type of ceiling beam now being studied will be used throughout Yugoslavia after it is tested.

Last year long concrete supports weighing over 25 tons were used in the bridge over the Bosut River, one of the major projects on the Brotherhood and Unity Highway. This was the first time that large-scale prefabricated construction had been used on a bridge in Yugoslavia. This year the Institute will supervise the construction of experimental prefabricated buildings of many different materials in order to discover the best material for prefabricated housing. More than 1,000 prefabricated housing units will be built this year in Belgrade.

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The laboratories of the Institute's factory are experimenting on improving the quality of Yugoslav cement by mixing it with Yugoslav quartz sand. Until recently, quartz sand was imported from Germany. Research on Yugoslav varieties of quartz sand, soon to be in use on Yugoslav construction projects, has been under way for some time. The Institute is also experimenting with various kinds of cement and gravel to be used as ingredients of concrete. When the best kind of concrete has been determined, the Institute will recommend its adoption on all Yugoslav construction sites.

Experiments are now in progress on a cement from Pula which causes concrete made from it to harden in 24 hours, whereas concrete made from ordinary cement requires 28 days to harden.

The quality of bitumen used in asphalt pavement also is being studied at the Institute.

NEW TYPE OF CEILING BEAM -- Borba, No 117, 18 May 49

A new type of ceiling beam, called "harmonika" by masons, is now in production at the "Konstruktor" construction enterprises in Maribor. Great savings in wood, nails, and time can be made, and comparatively unskilled workers can make the beams.

One square meter of this kind of ceiling beam is said to be capable of supporting a weight of 720 kilograms.

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